



The Phyllis Schlafly Report



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The NEA Spells Out Its Policies

The nation's largest teachers union, the National Education Association (NEA), attracted 9,000 delegates to its annual convention in Washington, DC over the Fourth of July weekend. Delegates sported buttons with provocative slogans such as "Gay marriage causes Global Warming only because we are so hot", "Hate is not a family value," "The 'Christian Right' is neither," and "Gay Rights are civil rights."

The delegates passed dozens of hard-hitting resolutions which now become the NEA's official policy. The resolutions authorize NEA members and employees to lobby for those goals in the halls of Congress and state capitols.

NEA resolutions cover the waterfront of all sorts of political issues that have nothing to do with improving education for schoolchildren, such as supporting statehood for the District of Columbia, a "single-payer health care plan" (*i.e.*, government-run), gun control, ratification of the International Criminal Court Treaty, and taking steps "to change activities that contribute to global climate change."

The NEA strongly opposes designating English as our official language (even though this is supported by more than 80% of Americans).

The NEA fiercely opposes any competition for public schools, such as vouchers, tuition tax credits, parental option plans, or public support of any kind to non-public schools. The NEA opposes homeschooling unless kids are taught by state-licensed teachers using a state-approved curriculum. The NEA wants to bar homeschooled students from participating in any extracurricular activities in public schools (even though their parents pay school taxes, too).

The NEA wants many additional (job-creating) services and programs to be provided by public schools such as early childhood education (*i.e.*, baby-sitting for pre-schoolers). NEA resolutions call for "programs in the public schools for children from birth through age eight," and for "mandatory kindergarten with compulsory attendance."

NEA resolutions include all the major feminist goals such as "the right to reproductive freedom" (*i.e.*, abortion on demand); "comparable worth" (*i.e.*, government control of wages according to feminist ideology rather than the free

market); full funding for the feminist boondoggle called the Women's Educational Equity Act; and "the use of non-sexist language" (*i.e.*, censoring out all masculine words such as husband and father).

The NEA even urges its affiliates to work for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment. The ERA was declared dead by the U.S. Supreme Court 26 years ago.

The influence of the gay lobby is pervasive in dozens of NEA resolutions adopted by 2008 convention delegates. Diversity is the code word used for pro-gay indoctrination in the classroom.

The NEA's Diversity resolution makes clear that this means teaching about "sexual orientation" and "gender identification," words that are repeated in dozens of resolutions. The NEA demands that "diversity-based curricula" even be imposed on preschoolers. NEA convention delegates were invited to an Open Hearing by the SOGI Committee in Room 149A on July 1. In case you don't know, SOGI stands for Sexual Orientation Gender Identification.

The NEA urges its members to offer "diverse role models" by the "hiring and promotion of diverse education employees in our public schools." The NEA puts domestic partnerships and civil unions on an equal footing with marriage.

The NEA wants every child (*i.e.*, regardless of age) to have "direct and confidential access [*i.e.*, without notification to parents] to comprehensive health [*i.e.*, including learning how to use condoms for premarital sex], social, and psychological programs and services." The NEA wants all sex education courses, textbooks, curricula, instructional materials and activities to include indoctrination about sexual orientation and gender identification plus warnings about homophobia.

The NEA wants public schools to take over the physical and mental care of students through school clinics that provide services, diagnosis, treatment, family-planning counseling, and access to birth control methods "with instruction in their use." Family planning clinics are called on to "provide intensive counseling."

The NEA is very generous with taxpayers' money spent on illegal aliens. The NEA not only favors amnesty for illegal

alien students, but also in-state college tuition and financial aid to illegal alien college students.

The NEA is strong for “multicultural education,” which the resolution makes clear does not mean studying facts about different countries and cultures. It means “the process of incorporating the values” and influencing “behavior” toward the NEA’s version of “the common good,” such as “reducing homophobia.”

Of course, the NEA supports “global education” to teach “interdependency in sharing the world’s resources.” It’s also no surprise that the NEA adamantly opposes any requirement that schools “schedule a moment of silence.”

Will parents be silent about the radical goals of their children’s teachers?

The NEA’s Political Activities

When the National Education Association held its annual national convention in Washington, DC this past summer, the NEA endorsed Barack Obama for President. 80% of the delegates, who claim to represent the 3-1/2 million-member teachers union, voted in favor of Obama. The following week, the nation’s second largest teachers union, the American Federation of Teachers, also endorsed Barack Obama. Barack Obama addressed both union conventions by satellite.

The crowd of 9,000 delegates at the NEA convention roared approval when Obama criticized George W. Bush’s No Child Left Behind Act, claiming that it forces teachers to “teach to a test at the expense of music and art.” Criticizing No Child Left Behind is guaranteed to please any NEA crowd, since the delegates are antagonistic to President Bush anyway.

The National Education Association plans to spend at least \$40 million on this year’s political campaigns, using new strategies and making a big effort to increase its already potent political influence. The NEA just opened a Campaign and Elections division devoted entirely to election politics. The NEA hired Karen White, who is the former political director of EMILY’s List to run it. EMILY’s List is a powerful political group that specifically supports pro-abortion Democratic women candidates.

The NEA president told the press that Karen White has helped the NEA to improve the sophistication of its political efforts. For example, Ms. White introduced the NEA to microtargeting, which is the tactic of identifying voter subgroups based on demographics and political and social preferences, and then crafting political messages designed for each subgroup.

This year, the NEA is working particularly in nine U.S. Senate races and up to 40 House races, several contests for Governor, and of course the presidential race. NEA president Reg Weaver promised, “We plan to be very aggressive.”

From Crayons to Condoms

“You’re the only parent who has complained” is a refrain that runs all through the stories of faddish methods, biased curricula, obscene assignments, and invasive surveys related in this new book by Steve Baldwin and Karen Holgate called *From Crayons to Condoms: The Ugly Truth about America’s Public Schools* (WND Books 2008).

The “ugly truth” about public schools includes describing high schoolers who can’t read, write or spell because they are victims of trendy “whole language” instruction, required courses in “death education” that actually encourage teen depression and suicide, and math classes where students write how they “feel” about math problems instead of learning multiplication tables, fractions, or algebra.

The chapter titles in this book give accurate clues to its sensational eye-witness evidence: “The Curriculum of Social Engineering,” “Self-Esteem Trumps Learning,” “The X-Rated Classroom,” “Pushing the Homosexual Agenda,” and “Parental Rights — Going, Going, Gone.”

Public school administrators sometimes try to shame parents out of their efforts to change the system for the better. Students, too, who raise objections often end up ostracized by teachers and peers. But as this book shows, you are not the only parent or student with complaints against these trends. Parents, students, and teachers all speak up in *From Crayons to Condoms* about their worst experiences with the public school bureaucracy. These are the experiences of average people in average school districts, so they reveal the extent of the problem as well as the prevalence of families’ frustration. Only a few of these dozens of stories have ever appeared in the media.

“It is not the job of the school system to fix all of society’s ills. I send my children to school for an education, not for social programs, risk surveys, or ‘preventive maintenance,’” writes Linda Rice, a parent whose children were subjected to invasive surveys, endless group work, and one ineffective prevention and awareness program after another.

The book affirms there are many good teachers in the public schools, and many teachers and administrators who don’t attempt to overstep their role in students’ lives. Others, however, repeatedly infringe on the integrity of the family by taking over as amateur psychologists, preachers of a secular world view, and deciders of what children need to know about sex, death and suicide, and other sensitive topics.

“Legislators have given schools this power,” the editors remind us. “They assume that with the breakdown of the family, all students are at-risk and in need of government intervention.” Many legislators and educators believe that “they are the ones that need to step in and make all these sick children well.”

The book concludes with a chapter on “What Can Parents Do?” Especially useful is the “school checklist” of al-

most 100 questions to ask about a school's instructional practices and philosophy. Most of these questions apply also to private school instruction and even homeschooling, and can help parents discern the strengths and weaknesses of their children's school.

Ben Stein Provokes Liberals' Wrath

Ben Stein is known to many as an actor on *Comedy Central*. But the funniest part about his latest movie called *Expelled* is not any clever lines spoken by Stein but the hysterical way the liberals are trying to discourage people from seeing it.

Stein's critics don't effectively refute anything in *Expelled*; they just use epithets to ridicule it and hope they can make it go away. However, it won't go away; even *Scientific American*, which labeled the movie "shameful," concedes that it cannot be ignored.

The movie is about how scientists who dare to criticize Darwinism or discuss the contrary theory called Intelligent Design (ID) are expelled, fired, denied tenure, blacklisted, and bitterly denounced. Academic freedom doesn't extend to this issue. The message of Stein's critics comes through loud and clear. They don't want anybody to challenge Darwinian orthodoxy or suggest that Intelligent Design might be an explanation of the origin of life.

Stein, who serves as his own narrator in the movie, is very deadpan about it all. He doesn't try to convince the audience that Darwinism is a fraud, or that God created the world, or even that some unidentified Intelligent Design might have started life on Earth. Stein merely shows the intolerance of the universities, the government, the courts, the grant-making foundations and the media, and their determination to suppress any mention of Intelligent Design.

The only question posed by the movie is why, oh why, is there such a deliberate, consistent, widespread, vindictive effort to silence all criticism of dogmatic Darwinism or discussion of alternate theories of the origin of life? Stein interviews scientists who were blacklisted, denied grants, and ostracized in the academic community because they dared to write or speak the forbidden words.

The liberals are particularly upset because the movie identifies Darwinism, rather than evolution, as the sacred word that must be isolated from criticism. But that semantic choice makes good sense because Darwinism is easily defined by Darwin's own writings, whereas the word evolution is subject to different and even contrary definitions.

Stein spent two years traveling the world to gather material for this movie. He interviewed scores of scientists and academics who say they were retaliated against because of questioning Darwin's theories.

Stein interviewed Dr. Richard Sternberg, a biologist who lost his position at the prestigious Smithsonian Institution af-

ter he published a peer-reviewed article that mentioned Intelligent Design. Other academics who said they were victims of the anti-ID campus police included astrobiologist Guillermo Gonzalez, denied tenure at Iowa State University, and Caroline Crocker, who lost her professorship at George Mason University.

Stein dares to include some filming at the death camps in Nazi Germany as a backdrop for interviews that explain Charles Darwin's considerable influence on Adolf Hitler and his well-known atrocities. The Darwin-Hitler connection was not a Stein discovery; Darwin's influence on Hitler's political worldview, and Hitler's rejection of the sacredness of human life, is acknowledged in standard biographies of Hitler.

Stein also addresses how Darwin's theories influenced one of the U.S.'s most embarrassing periods, the eugenics fad of the early 20th century. Thousands of Americans were legally sterilized as physically or mentally unfit. Mandatory sterilization based on Darwin's theories was even approved by the U.S. Supreme Court, with Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes writing his famous line, "Three generations of imbeciles are enough." Stein also reminds us that Margaret Sanger was a eugenicist who wanted to eliminate the races she believed were inferior.

Stein's message is that the attack on freedom of inquiry is anti-science, anti-American, and anti-the whole concept of learning. His dramatization should force the public, and maybe even academia, to address this extraordinary intolerance of diversity.

Public Schools Love New Fads

Every few years a new fad sweeps across the public schools. We've had self-esteem, new math, whole language, New Age, outcome-based education, school-to-work, mental health screening, school-based clinics, global education, diversity, multiculturalism, early childhood education, the banning of dodge ball and tag, and even the elimination of recess.

One of the newer public school fads, which has received much favorable publicity, is for high school freshmen to declare their major, after which they are required to take at least one course in that subject every trimester for four years. The major will be noted on their diploma.

How many kids between the ages of 14 and 18 do you think ever change their minds about what they like and don't like? Let's rephrase my question: do you know any teenagers who don't change their minds frequently? Most teens have a hard time deciding what to wear, what to eat, and with whom they will go to the prom. Probably most students haven't even selected their lifetime career when they start college.

But at Dwight Morrow High School in New Jersey, those who change their minds are out of luck. If they find they don't like their original choice, they can't change unless they produce a "compelling reason," but even that may not be suffi-

cient. In preparation for this “choose major” plan, students were asked to write essays about what they wanted to specialize in. The most popular subject chosen was sports management. The Dwight Morrow classrooms are ridiculously labeled Harvard, Yale and Rutgers.

The *Times* quoted a girl named Akelia who at 14 declared she wanted to be a lawyer, but after two years realized how much work she would have to put in studying “boring” cases, so she tried to switch to computers. Alas, she found she was locked into her major and not permitted to change.

If a teen is a world-class genius like Michelangelo, it could be a good thing to get started developing his talent early. But most of us are not Michelangelos, and we can’t count on the “choose major” experiment to produce modern Michelangelos. Most teens are not ready to lock into a lifetime career so early; they need to explore and investigate options and opportunities. Anyway, there are magnet schools for those who are ready for specialization.

Some jobs that students might choose today may not be available when they graduate, and other jobs may become available four years hence that don’t exist today.

This “choose major” fad seems to have spread nationwide under the radar without prior publicity. Apparently some hundreds of high schools now require students to specialize, but most are not so rigid as to require a major. Florida requires every ninth grader to major in one of some 400 state-approved subjects ranging from world cultures to fashion design. South Carolina requires students to designate one of 16 career clusters from agriculture to architecture. Mississippi has a pilot program to have ninth graders choose one of seven career paths from construction to technology.

Like any new school fad, “choose major” of course requires more taxpayer funding for new teachers, advisory boards for each track, and school guidance counselors to help students choose their six-year career path.

Unfortunately, choosing a major won’t solve the problem of high school dropouts who can’t read, write, add, subtract, multiply, or divide. Public schools will remain a national embarrassment unless and until the fundamentals are taught in elementary classes. I’m dreaming of a day when the “new” fad will be teaching all first-graders to read by the time-tested phonics system, and teaching all schoolchildren to know and use the fundamentals of arithmetic by the end of the third grade. This would end the shocking epidemic of illiteracy that now permits students to get into high school and even graduate without being able to read, write or calculate change at the grocery store.

Some Fads are Destructive

Some fads may be silly or worthless, but others are downright destructive. Writing most poignantly and descriptively about this subject is a British doctor, Theodore

Dalrymple, who practiced in London’s slums for 20 years and wrote a book in 2001 detailing his experiences called *Life at the Bottom*.

Dr. Dalrymple describes the results of the misguided social policies propagated by elite academics who set governmental policies. The quality of education has collapsed. Individual self-esteem has been demoralized by the nanny state. Public housing is filled with violence and drugs.

He says that the typical aristocrat can recover from a weekend binge, but the poor who copy such anti-social behavior suffer generations of misery.

Dr. Dalrymple shows how some of the chic, trendy, liberal notions adopted by the upper classes and the intelligentsia caused poverty and psychic desolation when imitated by the underclass. He identifies these fashionable fads as moral relativism, free love, free drugs, the rejection of acceptable rules of behavior, and multiculturalism. The characters he encountered on the streets of London are unforgettable.

In his 2005 book called *Our Culture, What’s Left of it: The Mandarins and the Masses*, Dr. Dalrymple continued with his thesis that poverty is caused by dysfunctional values modelled by the elites and then mimicked by the poor. He discusses the popular idea that we should throw off moral restrictions and he shows how that belief damages society as a whole. Dr. Dalrymple explains that the “do your own thing” philosophy is propagated by journalists, writers, actors, academics, and politicians who don’t want these restraints on their own lives.

Dr. Dalrymple told about his appearance on a panel with the leading feminist intellectual, Germaine Greer, and how she said that people should be true to their inclinations. He responded that following your own inclinations is not a prescription either for a happy life or for a good society. This idea hurts the poor the most. Rich movie stars and politicians can get away with moral laxity, but life without moral restraints severely hurts the poor. Dr. Dalrymple argues that the liberals like this result because social problems require more and more government programs.

Dr. Dalrymple says that to truly help the poor, we should make changes to reduce dependency. In the current system, the poor can act as they wish and still receive welfare, even though in the long run they would be better trying to stand on their own two feet.

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